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Contact: Kevin Hardy

## **Statewide Regents Workshop To Help Ensure Electronic Classroom Access For All Louisiana Students**

To help Louisiana educators address some far-reaching implications of the *Americans With Disabilities Act* (ADA), passed in 1990, the Louisiana Board of Regents is hosting the “Anytime, Anyplace, Anyone” statewide workshop in Baton Rouge on Saturday, September 27. The all-day workshop, subtitled “Ensuring Electronic Access for K-20 Students: Laws, Policies and Practices,” will explore the many facets of and issues inherent in providing accessible *electronic* learning opportunities for students with disabilities. The event is open to Louisiana educators at all levels who are involved in the electronic delivery of instruction.

“Ironically, while electronic delivery of course content has greatly improved educational access in general for Louisiana students, it comes with its own set of issues relative to extending that electronic access to students with disabilities,” said Mike Abbiatti, Board of Regents Associate Commissioner for Information and Learning Technology. “For example, there are obvious issues with computer use for visually-impaired students, and both visually-impaired and hearing-impaired students can be at a disadvantage in courses delivered via streaming video. This workshop is designed to touch on a wide range of accessibility issues, accommodation regulations, legal implications, policy approaches and even some possible hardware and software answers to some of these potential problems.”

Among the many important topics to be covered at the event are

- The Americans with Disabilities Act,
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act,
- The need for information technology access,
- Establishing policies related to accessible information technology,
- How to make websites and electronic course content “handicapped accessible,”
- Who is responsible for accommodations and “assistive technology,” and
- The realities of being a Disability Services Coordinator.

These topics and others will be presented by some of the nation’s foremost authorities on information technology accessibility. Among the most prominent experts scheduled to make

presentations are Curtis Edmonds, of Georgia Tech's Southeast Disability/Business Technical

(More)

## **Electronic Classroom Access**

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Assistance Center, and David Sweeney, of Texas A&M University's Adaptive Technology Services. Attendees will also be introduced to a broad range of valuable resources on information technology access for students with disabilities.

More than 70 attendees, representing primary, secondary and postsecondary education statewide, are expected to attend the workshop. Plenary sessions and an interactive panel discussion with special-needs students from across the state will be presented via the statewide interactive video network. In addition, sessions will be streamed over the internet and archived for later access and reference.

The *Anytime, Anyplace, Anyone* workshop will be held in the Claiborne Conference Center (First Floor, Claiborne Building, 1201 North Third Street; Baton Rouge, LA) on Saturday, September 27, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information or to register for the workshop, contact Diane Didier, Board of Regents Office of Information and Learning Technology, (225) 342-4252, or log on to the Board of Regents website: [www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us).

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